

Chairman, vice chair and committee members:

My name is Teddy, That's T-e-d-d-y Robertson R-o-b-e-r-t-s-o-n-; I'm a newly elected commissioner from Garfield Co. On behalf of myself, my board and my county, I would like to support this bison bill. We need to have a voice and control over the translocation of bison in our area. We have federal lands all around us. The CMR is the largest. We need to have the ability to manage bison in our county because they are a free roaming animal and pretty much go wherever they wish to. We need to be able to contain the bison so they won't destroy our fences, property and grain production and because they are free roaming they have health issues that transmit to cattle and humans. The biggest threat we have is brucellosis or Bangs, if you will. It causes cattle to abort and can create sterility in cattle, and can transmit undulant fever to humans. In its simplest definition, you can equate undulant fever with aids, once you have it there is no cure. This becomes an issue on several levels.

1. We are for the most part in our county Livestock producers, and I am one. I guess the best way to describe this is we've got some skin in the game.

Livestock producers have better health care for their cattle than most people do for themselves. We're not just raising cows we are feeding a nation. Agriculture represents less than 2% of the population in America. Brucellosis can decimate herds and devastate livelihoods & food production. When an issue impacts us it becomes our business. We cannot afford to lose anymore producers. Now if bison were classified as livestock that would change the dynamics and would protect the livestock as well as the producer better. That being said, we as commissioners have a responsibility to those who elected us to act on their behalf and we can't do that effectively unless we can manage bison translocation and we do support this bill. Please consider what I've said and I urge you to pass this bill and think about it the next time you sit for a meal. Healthy food is job one for us. Thank you.